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ABSTRACT

This paper, titled "The Components of Emotional Intelligence and the Relationship to Sales Performance," presents two general approaches to studying emotional intelligence. The first is a broad model approach that considers abilities as well as a series of personality traits. The second is based on ability models. The possible correlation between emotional intelligence and success as an automotive salesperson will be examined in a dissertation study of the degree to which the individual components of emotional intelligence contribute to sales performance. According to the dissertation proposal, a stratified random sample of sales guides from 17 automotive retail stores in Denver, Colorado, will be tested. The sales guides will be asked to complete the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale, which is an ability test designed to measure the following four branches of the emotional intelligence ability model of Mayer and Salovey: identifying emotions; using emotions; understanding emotions; and managing emotions. The test results will be correlated with the sales guides' individual sales performance. If a correlation is discovered between high levels of the components of emotional intelligence and high performance in sales, several actions could be taken. If sales guides are identified as having low emotional intelligence, training on respective topics may help raise their emotional intelligence and thereby improve their sales. (Contains 90 references.) (MN)

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The Components of Emotional Intelligence and the Relationship to Sales Performance

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This paper reviews a model of emotional intelligence that emphasizes the components of Perception, Assimilation, Understanding and Managing of emotion. The purpose of the present study is to examine the relationship between the components of emotional intelligence and individual work performance in a sales environment. A research methodology and literature review will be presented.

Keywords: Emotions, Intelligence and Performance

Introduction and Overview

Following Goleman's (1995) research on emotional intelligence, the topic has received considerable attention in popular business literature. In addition to recent newspaper and magazine articles, several books have been written on emotional intelligence in the business world. (Cooper 1997; Segal 1997; Steiner 1997; Weisinger 1998). Despite the growing literature lauding the benefits of emotional intelligence, there is little empirical evidence to support that a high degree of the components of emotional intelligence in individuals results in a high level of work performance. The purposed research seeks to fill that void.

The other construct that will be explored is that of sales performance [Weitz, 1986]. There is extensive research correlating a wide variety of topics with sales performance: Time Management, Achievement Striving and Cars Sales Performance (Barling 1996); Achievement Striving and Sales Performance (Bluen 1990); Instrumental and Expressive Personality Traits and Sales Performance (Comer 1997); Reward Structure, Extraversion and Sales Performance (Stewart 1996); Sales Force Performance and Satisfaction [Bagozzi, 1978 75]; Moral Judgment and Job Performance (Schwepker 1996). However, after a thorough literature review it was found that the components of emotional intelligence listed above have not been studied in relationship to sales performance. This study will fill that void as well and will focus on the sales theory of adaptive selling (Weitz 1990) albeit, the intent of the present research is to obtain a better understanding of emotional intelligence and high performers. Therefore, this study could focus on doctors and the relationship with patients or teachers and feedback from students, however, I have chosen to study emotional intelligence through sales people.

The objective of the purposed research is to provide a framework for research directed toward increasing the understanding of the components of emotional intelligence in a sales environment. The framework centers on the specific components of emotional intelligence and their relationship to performance in sales. Though emotional intelligence may be only one element of success in sales, it indicates the degree to which salespeople are able to take advantage of the unique communication of elements associated with personal selling (Sullivan 1995). Personal selling is the only communication vehicle in which the marketing message can be adapted to the specific customer's needs and beliefs (Sujan 1978). Salespeople have the opportunity to do "market research" on each customer and implement a sales presentation that is maximally effective for that customer. In addition, they can observe the reactions of their customers to sales messages and make rapid adjustments (Weitz 1978). "The practice of adaptive selling is defined as the altering of sales behaviors during a customer interaction or across customer interactions based on perceived information about the nature of the selling situation" (Weitz 1986).

After defining emotional intelligence, a discussion of the antecedents and consequences will be presented. Then a proposed research methodology will be presented. Emotional intelligence (Salovey 1990) has been defined as: knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships. The definition of emotional intelligence has more recently been refined "Emotional Intelligence refers to an ability to recognize the meanings of emotions and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them" (Mayer, 2000).

It is proposed that salespeople may exhibit a high level of these emotional intelligence attributes when they use different sales approaches across sales encounters and when they make adjustments in their behavior during the encounters. In contrast, it is proposed that a low level of emotional intelligence is indicated by the use of the same sales approach in and during all sales encounters.

Emotion is defined as a mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisal of events or thoughts; has a phenomenological tone; is accompanied by physiological processes; is often expressed physically (e.g., in gestures, posture, facial features); and may result in specific actions to affirm or cope with the emotion, depending on its nature and meaning for the person having it [Bagozzi, 1999]. Emotions (Mayer, 2000) are "internal events that coordinate many psychological subsystems including physiological responses, cognitions, and conscious awareness."

At the individual level, Salovey and Mayer [1990] state that emotional intelligence is the "subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions". An emotionally intelligent individual is able to recognize and use his or her own and others' emotional states to solve problems and regulate behavior.

Problem Statement

The success of a sales organization is highly dependent on the performance of its salesforce [Cravens, 1993]. Prescriptions for salesforce improvement generally fall into two categories (Stewart 1996). The first category encompasses efforts to hire people who possess personality traits congruent with sales behavior. The second category includes endeavors to develop control systems (e.g. evaluation, training, and compensation practices) that facilitate sales. Although both approaches have been linked to performance improvement (Churchill 1985), no empirical research has been done to integrate the theory of emotional intelligence with salesforce control systems. The current study will provide a basis to begin further integration.

Most research on selling has largely ignored the emotional aspects of personal selling. In comparison to information processing and behavioral decision research, little is known about the role of emotions in marketing behavior. Much of what is known is confined to consumer behavior, as opposed to the behavior of salespeople or managers (Bagozzi 1999).

Rather than considering the role of emotions, empirical research has sought to uncover sales behaviors that are effective over a wide range of selling situations. The equivocal and even contradictory nature of the findings suggests that there are no universally effective selling behaviors (Weitz 1979). "Every contact a salesman has involves a different human problem or situation and no one way to sell" (Thompson 1973). Thus, effective salespeople need to use a contingency approach to match the specific situations they encounter (Weitz 1978). In order to be able to adapt to specific customers and situations a high level of the components of emotional intelligence may prove useful. The relationship between the components of emotional intelligence and performance in sales is the intent of this dissertation.

Although empirical research in personal selling has not directly investigated emotional intelligence, there is some evidence that salespeople do adjust their sales approaches to fit perceptions of customers and that such adjustments improve performance. A field experiment (Wise 1974) demonstrated that automobile salespeople varied the price quoted and treatment offered on the basis of customers' sex and race. Another study (Spiro 1979) found relationships between influence tactics used by salespeople during a sales interaction and characteristics of the interaction. The consistency of these findings suggests the best salespeople use different approaches in different situations. In order to identify the proper approach for the situation, it is proposed that emotional intelligence may be an important factor. Weitz (1978) found the performance of salespeople to be related to their knowledge of customer values and beliefs. Aspects of emotional intelligence include a capability to distinguish the meanings of emotions and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them. This helps in perceiving the customers' emotions, understanding the information of those emotions, and managing them.

Perceiving, assimilating, understanding and managing emotions allows salespeople an opportunity to develop and implement a sales presentation tailored to each customer. In addition, "salespeople can make rapid adjustments in the message in response to their customers' reactions" (Weitz 1990). Empirical research has mostly disregarded the unique emotional aspects of personal selling. Rather than focusing on the antecedents and consequences of emotional intelligence, sales research has been directed toward uncovering universally effective sales behaviors and behavioral predispositions. This research has been largely unsuccessful in uncovering sales behaviors that are effective over a wide range of selling behaviors (Weitz 1979).

Purpose

The objective of the proposed research is to identify if there is a correlation between the components of emotional intelligence and success as an automotive sales person. More specifically the degree to which each individual component contributes to an increase in sales will be identified. For the purposes of this paper, success is considered being in the top quartile of sales performance within a single store. The study will describe and examine emotional intelligence in the context of an automotive sales environment. Additionally, the factors that contribute to high performance in sales, specifically adaptive selling will be discussed. Finally, this research will further add to the body of existing research work that has been done with the test instrument, the intent is not to validate the psychometrics of the instrument as that has already been achieved.

Significance

If a correlation exists between high levels of the components of emotional intelligence and high performance in sales, several actions could be taken. EQ levels can change and aren't fixed like IQ or personality traits (BarOn 1988). Therefore if sales guides are identified as having low emotional intelligence, training on respective topics may help raise their emotional intelligence and hence improve their sales.

This information is important for researchers, corporate human resource managers and sales managers. This information could change the way they view the sales experience and the consumer. More importantly this research will add to the body of knowledge,

which will support or debunk the theory of emotional intelligence and the relationship to high performance. The present research will also add to the body of knowledge in sales research and adaptive selling.

Hypothesis:

H_0	A high relationship between the individual components of emotional intelligence (perception, assimilating, understanding and managing of emotion) does not result in high sales performance.
H_A	A high relationship between the individual components of emotional intelligence (perception, assimilating, understanding and managing of emotion) does result in high sales performance.

Research Design

A stratified random sample of Sales Guides from seventeen automotive retail stores will be tested, (approximately one-third of the Sales Guides from each store.) The stores are retailers of new cars. Each store employs a different number of Sales Guides depending on the stores size and volume. The testing will take place on-site at each of the stores and will be voluntary for the Sales Guides. The stores selected are located in Denver, Colorado. There are two hundred and seventy-five total stores located across the nation that are company owed. However only these seventeen stores have common sales processes, policies and procedures. Therefore they were selected to help eliminate any outside variables that might effect sales performance. Sales Guides will include the following demographic groups: Male, Female, Caucasian, African American, Asian, and Hispanic.

The test instrument selected is the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) which is an ability test designed to measure these four branches of the emotional intelligence ability model of Mayer and Salovey (1997):

Identifying Emotions - the ability to recognize how you and those around you are feeling.
Using Emotions - the ability to generate emotion, and then reason with this emotion.
Understanding Emotions - the ability to understand complex emotions and emotional "chains", how emotions transition from one stage to another.
Managing Emotions - the ability which allows you to manage emotions in your self and in others.

The MEIS is a paper and pencil ability test of emotional intelligence. It measures 4 branches of emotional intelligence as defined by Mayer & Salovey (1997) and provides a total emotional intelligence score as well. It is designed for ages 17 years and older (norms on 500 adults) there is also a version available for ages 12 to 16 (norms on 229 subjects).

There are 11 independent sub-tests for the adult version and testing time is about 1 hour 10 minutes for all 11 sub-tests. All the subtests will be used in the present research. The test will be scored by entering data into SPSS (400+ variables for the full test).

Research Design and Methodology

Research Type : Field Experiment
Independent Variable: Emotional Intelligence
Dependent Variable: Sales Performance
Groups: Sales Guides

Sales Guides	MEIS	
G1 n=35	x1	0 1
G2 n=35	x2	0 2
G3 n=35	x3	0 3

Procedure

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Participants will be given a testing booklet and answer sheet with instructions for completion. They will be given up to two hours to complete and return the testing booklet and answer sheet. Approximately one-third of the Sales Guides in each store will be selected for the study. The Sales Guides will be told that they will receive confidential feedback on their test results.

Results

The individual test results will be correlated with the individual performance of each of the Sales Guides. The individual performance will be the average number of cars sold over the previous six months. The six-month average will compensate for extraneous variables such as a change in policy, managers or special advertising.

Confidentiality

The researcher has agreed that the MEIS will be used for research purposes only and not for commercial gain. The MEIS, and all derivatives thereof, is and shall remain the exclusive property of Multi-Health Systems (MHS); MHS shall own all right, title and interest, including, without limitation, the copyright, in and to the MEIS. The MEIS will not be modified or works created that are derivative of the MEIS. The researcher will provide MHS with a copy of any research findings arising out of the use of the MEIS and will cite Mayer, Caruso and Salovey in any of my publications relating thereto.

Individual results will be kept confidential and will not be shared with the employer or any manager of the sponsoring organization. Aggregate results however, will be shared with the organization for the purposes of creating training, development and selection tools. Individual results will be shared with the sales guides in a one-on-one feedback session with the researcher. This will be down within a six-month timed frame after the results have been completed.

Literature Review

There are two general approaches to the study of emotional intelligence. First, there is a broad model approach, an socio-emotional approach that includes abilities as well as a series of personality traits. The popular work of Goleman fits into this area. To some extent, the initial Salovey and Mayer (1990) model also is an socio-emotional, or mixed, model. In fact, an early measure of emotional intelligence, the Trait Meta-Mood Scale, is a self-report measure of emotional clarity, mood repair and attention. The second type of model of emotional intelligence is an ability model.

The theory of emotional intelligence is not new. Over the years even the most ardent theorists of IQ have tried to bring emotions within the domain of intelligence. Salovey has mapped in great detail the ways in which we can bring intelligence to our emotions (Salovey 1990). When Robert Sternberg asked people to describe an "intelligent person," practical people skills were one of the traits listed (Sternberg 1985). Research by Sternberg led him to E.L. Thorndike's conclusion: that social intelligence is both distinct from academic abilities and a key part of what makes people do well in the practicalities of life. Thorndike divided intelligent activity into three types: social intelligence, concrete intelligence, and abstract intelligence [Thorndike, 1904].

Emotional Intelligence

In recent year's psychologists (Sternberg 1985; Salovey 1990) among them, have taken a wider view of intelligence, trying to reinvent it in terms of "what it takes to be successful in life." Although Thorndike first wrote of the concept of emotional intelligence, it was largely ignored until Salovey and Mayer revived it. Salovey subsumed Gardner's personal intelligences in his five domains of emotional abilities (Salovey 1990):

1. Knowing one's emotions 2. Managing emotions 3. Motivation 4. Recognizing emotions in others 5. Handling relationships

Emotional Intelligence was popularized by [Goleman, 1995] and since 1995 there has been a growing interest in the theory [Farnham, 1996 #9; Segal, 1997 #20; Steiner, 1997 #22; Weisinger, 1998 #23; Cooper, 1997 #21; Blackburn, 1996 #12]. Goleman, who is a psychologist and science writer for the New York Times caught the attention of the entire nation with his book in 1995. He suggests a type of social intelligence, based on neuroscience and psychological theories, which includes rational and emotional intelligence. Goleman's opinions are comparable to Gardner's as far as interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences are concerned.

The theory of Emotional Intelligence has often been conceptualized (particularly in popular literature) as involving much more than the ability at perceiving, assimilating, understanding, and managing emotions (Mayer 2000). These conceptions include not only emotion and intelligence per se, but also motivation, non-ability dispositions and traits, and global personal and social functioning (Goleman 1995; Bar-On 1997). Widening the theory of Emotional Intelligence seems to undermine the utility of the terms under consideration. These have been called *mixed* conceptions because they combine so many diverse ideas. An example is the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQi) that includes 15 self-report scales that measure a person's self-regard, independence, problem solving, reality testing, and other attributes (Bar-On 1997). Such qualities as problem-solving and reality testing seem closely related

to ego strength or social competence than to emotional intelligence. Mixed models must be analyzed carefully so as to distinguish the concepts that are a part of emotional intelligence from the concepts that are mixed in, or confounded, with it (Mayer 2000).

Using almost identical components, Emotional Intelligence is similar to the theory of social intelligence. The terms used to describe the two include, the ability to accurately perceive one's own emotions and that of others; to master one's own emotions and respond appropriately in various life situations; and to enter into relationships where honest expression of emotions is balanced against courtesy, consideration, and respect. Social Intelligence as defined by Thorndike (1920) is the ability to perceive one's own and others' internal states, motives, and behaviors, and to respond to them optimally on the basis of that information.

Emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth [Goleman, 1995][Salovey, 1990][Mayer, 1996][Mayer, 1993][Mayer, 1997]. This definition, affirm Mayer & Salovey (1997) connects intelligence and emotion because it combines the ideas that emotion makes thinking more intelligent and that one thinks intelligently about emotions.

A model of emotional intelligence should, based on recent research (Mayer 2000), link emotions with reasoning. Non-ability, or mixed, models do not describe emotional intelligence, but are instead, compendiums of positive, pro-social behaviors and personality traits (e.g., (Goleman 1995; Bar-On 1997)). This is more than just an issue of semantics. In some models, skills are confused with outcomes, and personality traits with abilities. These models may be of value; however, there may be little that is unique about these models that is not already accounted for by existing personality theories and measures. A cursory analysis of the 25 traits proposed by Goleman indicates that there is overlap, for instance with the five-factor model of personality and especially, the measurement of these five factors (Mayer 2000). This is, in essence, what Davies et al (1998 #175) concluded.

An ability model of emotional intelligence, such as the one developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997), views emotional intelligence as a set of skills that combine emotions and cognition. They defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Specifically, emotional intelligence (Mayer 2000) is viewed as consisting of four separate components: Identifying Emotions (the ability to recognize how you and those around you are feeling); Using Emotions (the ability to generate emotion, and then reason with this emotion); Understanding Emotions (the ability to understand complex emotions and emotional "chains", how emotions transition from one stage to another); and, Managing Emotions (the ability which allows you to manage emotions in your self and in others).

Emotional intelligence and IQ

Comparisons of two theoretical pure types (Block 1995): people high in IQ versus people high in emotional aptitudes show that IQ and emotional intelligence are not opposing competencies, but rather separate ones. The high-IQ pure type is almost a caricature of the intellectual, adept in the realm of mind but inept in the personal world.

Intelligence quotient (IQ) makes up only 15 to 20 percent of what distinguishes star performers from others, but the most successful employee has mastery over soft skills (Brotherton 1998). "IQ is just the entry point, what's more important is emotional intelligence" (Goleman 1995). Goleman in his book "Emotional Intelligence" cited a study at Bell Laboratories that looked at employees with very high IQs and similar educational backgrounds. The outstanding performers were those who excelled in getting along with colleagues, listening and other interpersonal skills. These skills says Goleman, are "increasingly important for success." Companies that develop these skills will thrive in a competitive environment.

In a longitudinal study of Harvard graduates, [Ekman, 1992] reported that I.Q. does not explain the different life adjustments made by people in his sample. The "brightest" men in college were not necessarily the most successful. The criteria for success were salary, status in their fields, and achievements. The high achievers in college were also deemed to be less satisfied and less happy. This is the crux of the theory of emotional intelligence, that high intelligence and academic success do not necessarily coincide with emotional acumen and can result in a less satisfactory life adjustment. Intelligence, per se, has little to do with emotional intelligence or success in life [Goleman, 1995].

However, the equivocal nature of emotional intelligence may be demonstrated through consideration of two rather different research traditions (Davies 1998). First, it would appear that emotionally adept individuals have certain personality traits that are known to share no particular relation with cognitive abilities (Boyle 1995). On the other hand, emotional intelligence appears conceptually at the very least, to show some important convergence with other types of abilities, particularly social and crystallized intelligence (Davies 1998).

Inasmuch as it is generally believed that there is no relationship between intelligence and emotional intelligence, or a zero correlation, thus far few have separated emotional intelligence from general intelligence and other kinds of intelligence (Ekman 1992;

Goleman 1995; Mayer 1997). Nevertheless, it has been suggested that emotional intelligence has the discriminate validity lacking in measures of social and crystallized intelligence (Mayer 1993; Mayer 1997).

Most recently, Mayer and Salovey (1997) have found other definitions of emotional intelligence broad and imprecise, lacking a major component – the thinking component. Emotions should be thought about. Their revised definition [Mayer, 1997] as previously stated accounts for the thinking component and the link to intelligence.

"To have enough freedom, flexibility, range, and reason to work effectively, a person needs both IQ (traditional intellectual quotient) and EI (emotional intelligence)" (Covey 1996). The material on emotional intelligence is something we know intuitively. It underscores the fact that when we look at verbal reasoning capacities (the typical IQ approach) we look at a very small spectrum of human intelligence. "Emotional intelligence comprises the qualities (some call it "character") that allow some people to succeed where others equally or better endowed with native intelligence still fail" (Sullivan 1995). Emotional intelligence could clarify intelligence, if associated with the consequences of intelligent behavior [Mayer, 1996].

Emotional Intelligence Assessment Instruments

Instruments developed for measuring the appraisal and expression of emotion for verbal and non-verbal components (Salovey 1990) are the Beth Israel Psychosomatic Questionnaire, the Schalling-Sifeneos Personality Scales, and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Selfness, 1991; Klieger, 1980; Apfel, 1979). Among the instruments which measure the nonverbal component of emotion, which can be expressed and appraised (Ekman 1975; Fridlund 1987; Ekman 1991) are the Affect Rating Scale and the Affective Communication Test (Buck 1975; Buck 1977; Freedman 1980).

Appraisal and expression of emotions in others may be nonverbal perception of emotion and empathy, a sort of "body language" appraisal (Salovey 1990). Instruments used for measuring the nonverbal perception of emotion are the Affect Sensitivity Test, the Communication of Affect Receiving Ability Test, and the Profile of Nonverbal Sensitivity (Campbell 1971; Buck 1976; Kagan 1978, September; Rosenthal 1979; Buck 1984). Some of the instruments used for measuring empathy, that have been found to be critical to a person's well being (Kessler 1985; Thoits 1986) are the Emotional Empathic Tendency Scale (Mehrabian 1972), and the Balanced Emotional Empathy Scale (Mehrabian 1996).

Recent tests for measuring emotional intelligence have been self-report instruments (e.g., (Mayer 1994; Salovey 1995)). Self-reports of ability and actual ability are only minimally correlated in the realm of intelligence research (Paulhus 1998). The challenge with self-assessment instruments is that when individuals are asked how accurate they are at reading other people's feelings, there is no correlation between their answers and how well they actually perform on objective tests (Davis 1997). In contrast, when people who know them well rate someone on empathy, there is a very high level of accuracy (Goleman 1998). Goleman claims the idea evaluation relies not on any one source but on multiple perspectives. These may include self-reports as well as peer, boss, and subordinate feedback. One such tool is the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI), which is a 360-degree tool designed to assess the emotional competencies of individuals and organizations (Boyatzis, 1995; Goleman, 1998; Hay/McBer, 1996).

However, "emotional intelligence can be accessed most directly by asking a person to solve emotional problems" (Mayer 1990; Mayer 1996). Self-concept is important, of course, because people often act on their beliefs about their actual abilities (Bandura 1977). Emotional intelligence as a domain of intelligence, however, is best studied with ability measures (Mayer 2000).

Conclusion

In this study it is suggested that salespeople's emotional intelligence has an important bearing on their performance. The emotional intelligence aspect of people's work is being increasingly recognized as important by organizational researchers. Researchers are taking a broader view of intelligence, trying to put it in terms of being able to live a successful life. This broader view elevates the importance of emotional intelligence.

Psychology has viewed emotions from two different perspectives. First, that emotions and logical reasoning are opposites of each other (Woodworth 1940). This view holds that emotions are the cause of disruptions of mental activities so inferior that they consequently should be calmed and concealed. Accordingly, emotions are unconscious, visceral responses due to a maladjustment that interferes with the rational functioning of the person.

The second perspective is that emotions are an essential element of logical reasoning and of intelligence in general (Leeper 1949). This perspective holds that emotions are organized responses that adaptively trigger cognitive activities and direct actions (Salovey 1990). In this view, emotions are organized responses to an internal or external event, with positive or negative meaning (Salovey 1990).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p.189). Social intelligence (Thorndike 1920) essentially supports the same concept, as does personal intelligence (Gardner 1983).

In regard to sales theory, personal selling is inherently a dynamic influence process (Weitz 1979; Weitz 1986; Weitz 1990). Effective salespeople need to alter their sales approaches both within and across sales interactions. However, the conceptual underpinning of most prior research is a static "source-message-receiver" model that does not include the above aspect of personal selling (Capon 1977).

Recent inquiry in sales has followed a dyadic approach. Intrinsic in this approach is the understanding that salespeople must adjust to the specific customer with whom they are interacting. Empirical research based on the dyadic approach has concentrated on static properties of the customer-salesperson dyad such as similarity and relative expertise (Woodside 1974; Busch 1976; Riordan 1977).

Building on the dyadic theme, the contingency approach (Weitz 1981), emphasizing the importance of tailoring sales approaches to specific sales situations and customers. This approach clearly suggests the need for the components of emotional intelligence; self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill. However, the contingency approach like other dyadic research, does not explore how this knowledge is developed and effectively utilized.

This dissertation proposal suggests that the components of emotional intelligence are the critical characteristics that enable salespeople to excel in their roles. The nature of the individual components are described and methods for accessing are presented. Finally the proposed framework suggests methods for developing the Emotional Intelligence components and motivating salespeople to use this information in sales situations. Thus, the conceptual framework presented comprises the factors that enable salespeople to capitalize on the unique opportunity to modify influence endeavors according to the characteristics of each influence situation.

The proposed framework is best viewed as a point of departure for both theory testing and theory building. The discussion suggests testable hypotheses. But it also suggests that more inductive work and field research is needed so that our theories can capture the complexities of emotional intelligence.

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